



Associated Press

Vytautas Landsbergis, the new President of Lithuania.

Moscow Putting Added Pressure On Lithuanians

By ESTHER B. FEIN

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MOSCOW, March 19 — The Soviet Government sharply increased its pressure on Lithuania today, ordering Kremlin ministries to step up protection of vital Soviet installations in the republic and forbidding them "to enter into any negotiations whatsoever" with the Lithuanian government about transferring control of Soviet enterprises to its authorities.

The Government statement warned Lithuania, which recently declared its independence from the Soviet Union, against issuing its own currency, establishing independent foreign trade links or trying to take over Moscow-run enterprises. [Text, page A13.]

A Warning to Others

The declaration was issued against a backdrop of psychological maneuverings on both sides of the mounting dispute. Moscow seems to be trying to intimidate Lithuania into recanting its independence proclamation through a steady flow of official denunciations and an unannounced staging of military maneuvers in the republic this weekend. Meanwhile the Lithuanian leadership has been soberly maintaining throughout that it regards its dealings with the Soviet Union as negotiations with a foreign Government.

The new Moscow order could be another round in this tactical game, as well as a pre-emptive warning to independence-minded governments in the neighboring Baltic republics of Latvia

and Estonia against similar action.

Although today's warning did not elaborate on what specific measures Moscow would take to protect its interests in Lithuania, it represented the first Government plan to address Lithuania's March 11 declaration of independence, which President Mikhail S. Gorbachev and the Soviet Congress have denounced as "invalid."

The new President of Lithuania, Vytautas Landsbergis, tonight issued a brief response to the Government statement, saying resolving the issues arising from Lithuania's decision required "two sides, which are willing to sit down at the negotiating table."

The Government action was announced after Mr. Landsbergis sent a letter today to Mr. Gorbachev rejecting the Soviet leader's call to repeal the declaration of independence.

Mr. Gorbachev's request was issued on Friday, after the Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow adopted a resolution condemning the Lithuanian declaration and the decision to suspend the Soviet Constitution in Lithuania.

In his letter to Mr. Gorbachev, Mr. Landsbergis said the Congress's resolution "does not have legal foundation." He repeated Lithuania's position that the legal interests of the Soviet Union in Lithuania "should be specifically defined through negotiations and will receive careful consideration by the Republic of Lithuania."

Misrepresentation Charged

Mr. Landsbergis assured Mr. Gorbachev that human rights and law and order were being maintained in Lithuania, and he complained that speeches by deputies at the Soviet Congress last week "misrepresented the facts" about the situation in the republic and "contained elements of interference."

The letter was delivered by two Lithuanian deputies to the national Parliament, Vaidotas Antanaitis and Egidijus Bickauskas, who met briefly today with Mr. Gorbachev in an attempt to initiate negotiations on independence.

Antanas Buracas, a deputy to the Supreme Soviet who is in the six-member Lithuanian delegation that arrived in Moscow seeking talks with Mr. Gorbachev, said that the meeting was "formal" and that the Soviet President had indicated his "intention to deal firmly and strongly with Lithuania on this matter."

A commentator on Soviet television said Mr. Gorbachev had ordered the Government to take "priority measures" today to carry out the congressional resolution because "the republic's current leadership has embarked on a path of flagrant violations of constitutional order and arbitrary resolution of questions involving the interests of the Soviet Union."

Protection of Power Plants

The Government declaration, which was read on the main evening television news program Vremya, called for "radically stepping up" protection of atomic power plants and other vital Soviet installations in Lithuania.

In response to charges that the Lithuanian authorities planned to set up their own customs posts on the Soviet

The Soviet authorities move to protect vital installations.

border, Moscow also ordered the Interior Ministry, the K.G.B. and the central customs administration to enforce Soviet customs regulations.

The Government declaration was the latest step in what Lithuanian residents have described as a kind of "psychological warfare" that the central authorities are using to remind them of the power that Moscow still wields over their lives.

On Sunday, Soviet military maneuvers were held in the republic. Military jets flew over Vilnius, the capital, and exercises were held in the southern countryside, near the border with Byelorussia.

Moscow has repeatedly ruled out military force as a means of imposing their will on Lithuania.

Landsbergis Meets Military

Mr. Landsbergis said that in a meeting Sunday with senior military officials in the region, he was told that the exercises, though unannounced, were routine and had been previously scheduled.

The Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman, Gennadi I. Gerasimov, denied rumors of major troop movements in the republic, saying: "No major military maneuvers are under way in Lithuania. The troops are operating in accordance with current training plans."

Mr. Landsbergis described the maneuvers as a provocation and said, "I think they're just trying to make us nervous."

Lithuanian residents also reported that as part of what they perceived as an attempt to intimidate them, their international telephone links have been nearly completely disrupted since the weekend. The telephone company asserts that maintenance work is being done on the lines.

In addition, transmission of the Vilnius radio has been blocked over its regular airwaves, and repair work at local Lithuanian television kept the channel off the air this morning.

Show of Force, U.S. Says

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WASHINGTON, March 19 — Several Government officials said today that Soviet military maneuvers in Lithuania appear so far to be more a show of force than preparations to take military control.

One official, who refused to be identified, said that at least 30,000 Soviet troops could be immediately assembled in the area should Moscow decide to take military action to prevent Lithuania's move toward independence.

Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d, who was in Windhoek, Namibia, for independence ceremonies, made it clear today that the Administration was closely watching Soviet behavior in Lithuania.

"They say they are not going to use force," he said, "and we would like to hear them say that again."